

NBC BRIEFING**26 August 1964****NEAR EAST ARMS RACE**

- I. **Nasir's UAR and Israel apparently both recognize the possibility of a show-down developing between them should the situation in Jordan get out of control.**
 - A. **Israeli leaders have repeatedly said that they cannot tolerate being surrounded by states under Nasir's control, and the Israeli public has long been conditioned to the "necessity" for military action to improve Israel's position should encirclement threaten.**
 - B. **Nasir has said that if Israel moved into Jordan, the UAR "of course" would have to fight; while this may well be bluff and while Nasir is no doubt aware that the UAR is still weaker militarily than Israel, he would probably feel under real pressure to do something militarily to counter an Israeli move.**
- II. **Against this background, both the UAR and Israel have moved in the last two months to acquire more and better arms. Both apparently feared that the recent session of the United Nations General Assembly might result in an arms embargo over the Near East.**

DIA review(s) completed.

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III.

[redacted]
[redacted] the UAR has received substantial arms deliveries from the Soviet Bloc in recent weeks, and that it is seeking more.

A. In the past six weeks, the Soviet Union has delivered to the UAR's Syrian region, [redacted] arms which have included:

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1. 50 to 60 T-54 medium tanks.
2. Over 150 artillery pieces, some of which were antitank and antiaircraft weapons.
3. Probably a squadron (about 15) of MIG-17 jet fighters.

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4. [redacted]

[redacted] As of now, the Soviet Bloc has supplied the UAR with some \$400,000,000 worth of arms (\$250,000,000 to Egypt and \$150,000,000 to Syria).

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- IV. The Israelis are almost certainly aware both of the recent deliveries to the UAR and of the additional UAR requests. They had earlier told our air attache in Tel Aviv they were particularly concerned over the possibility that the UAR might get MIG-19's.**
- A. The Israelis, in their turn, are asking the US and Western European countries for more and better arms, including:**
- 1. 200 tanks, 350 antitank recoilless rifles, 600 half-tracks, 2 or 3 small submarines (500-600 tons), helicopters and transport planes, newer jet fighters (from France), signal equipment, 800 trucks, and anti-aircraft guided missiles (the Israelis mention the Nike).**
 - 2. The French, cooling a little toward Israel since De Gaulle came to power, nonetheless appear willing to "honor" their "commitments" to the Israelis. French-Israeli military arrangements have been closely held since Suez.**

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3. The British are reported to be willing to sell Israel half-tracks and two small submarines. Further arms talks are now in progress in London.

V. Thus the arms race that began in earnest with Nasir's deal with the Soviet Bloc three years ago continues unabated.

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